

Board of Education Agenda Item

Item: _____ N. _____

Date: October 26, 2005

Topic: Report on Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Science, History and Social Science, and Personal and Social Development (Preschool Standards)

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Origin:

☒ Topic presented for information only (no board action required)

☐ Board review required by
☐ State or federal law or regulation
☐ Board of Education regulation
☐ Other: _____

☐ Action requested at this meeting ☐ Action requested at future meeting:
_____ (date)

Previous Review/Action:

☐ No previous board review/action

☒ Previous review/action
date January 12, 2005
action A report on preschool standards in literature and mathematics was presented to the Board of Education.

Background Information: In 2001, the Department of Education developed the document, *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Guidelines for Literacy and Mathematics*. The purpose of the document was to provide early childhood educators a set of guidelines for literacy and mathematics with indicators of success for entering kindergarten students. A committee of Department of Education specialists, literacy and mathematics professors from Virginia universities, and public and private preschool teachers and administrators developed the guidelines using current scientifically based research. The guidelines reflected a consensus of children's conceptual learning, acquisition of basic knowledge, and participation in meaningful and relevant learning experiences. The guidelines were also aligned to *Virginia's Kindergarten Standards of Learning*, *Virginia's Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening for Kindergarten (PALS-K)* and to the national guide, *Teaching Our Youngest, A Guide for Preschool Teachers and Child-Care Family Providers* produced by the Early Childhood-Head Start Task Force, U.S. Department of Education.

During the 2004 session of the Virginia General Assembly, language was added to the

Appropriation Act for the At-Risk Four-Year-Old Program (The Virginia Preschool Initiative) requiring the Department of Education, in cooperation with the Council on Child Day Care and Early Childhood Programs to establish academic standards that are in accordance with appropriate preparation for students to be ready to successfully enter into kindergarten. The additional language required that these standards be established in such a manner as to be measurable for student achievement and success.

In order to comply with these requirements, in the fall of 2003 the Department of Education convened a committee of Department of Education specialists and preschool teachers and administrators to review and revise *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Guidelines for Literacy and Mathematics*. The result of their work was the document *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Literacy and Mathematics*.

During the spring and summer of 2005, the Department of Education convened a committee of Department specialists and preschool teachers and administrators to develop preschool standards for four-year olds in the areas of science, history and social science, and personal and social development. The result of their work is the attached document *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Science, History and Social Science, and Personal and Social Development*. These standards have been aligned to *Virginia's Kindergarten Standards of Learning*, *National Science Education Standards*, and *National Council for Social Studies' Social Studies for Early Childhood and Elementary Children Preparing for the 21st Century*.

Summary of Major Elements: *Virginia's Foundation Blocks for Early Learning: Standards for Science, History and Social Science, and Personal and Social Development* describe specific indicators for prekindergarten children in the content areas of science and history and social science, as well as personal and social development. The topics covered in science and history and social science parallel the topics in the kindergarten standards for science and history and social science, while the topics for personal and social standards include self-concept, self-control, approaches to learning, interacting with others, and social problem-solving. These guidelines provide early childhood educators with a set of minimum standards with indicators of success for entering kindergarten.

Superintendent's Recommendation: The Superintendent of Public Instruction recommends that the Board of Education accept the report.

Impact on Resources: This responsibility was conducted within the agency's existing resources. If the agency is required to absorb additional responsibilities related to this activity, other services may be impacted.

Timetable for Further Review/Action: The Department of Education will notify school divisions of the preschool standards and the legislative requirement to comply with these preschool standards in Virginia preschool programs.

Virginia's
Foundation Blocks
for Early Learning:
Standards for Science,
History and Social Science,
And Personal and Social
Development (Preschool
Standards)

Presented to the
Virginia Board of Education

October 26, 2005

Standards for Science

Introduction

Preschool children are naturally curious about the world around them. These young learners frequently ask parents and teachers to explain why things happen. They are eager to see, listen to, touch, smell and taste things they encounter within their daily lives. At the same time, they are developing skills for effective communication and they are learning to work with other children. This natural curiosity provides the basis for understanding and using science process skills. Preschool education provides an

opportunity for students to experience the "big ideas". This is fundamentally important since children will vary widely in their previous experiences of using science process skills with such topics as life processes and properties of familiar materials, such as magnets and water. Through phenomena including shadows, patterns of weather, and plant growth, students are introduced to the concept of change. The significance of natural resources and conservation is also introduced in the preschool standards.

Science Foundation Blocks

Scientific Investigation, Reasoning, and Logic:

Block 1: The child will make observations, separate objects into groups based on similar attributes, compare lengths and mass, and develop questions based upon observations using the five senses.

Force, Motion, and Energy

Block 2: The child will describe and categorize properties of materials using magnets.

Matter

Block 3: The child will develop language to describe an object's position, movement and physical properties. The child will also describe properties of water and its movement.

Life Processes

Block 4: The child will compare the growth of a person to the growth of a plant and an animal to be able to describe basic life processes and basic needs of each.

Interrelationships in Earth/Space Systems

Block 5: The child will be able to create a shadow.

Earth Patterns, Cycles, and Change

Block 6: The child will identify simple patterns in his/her daily life. The child will identify things that change over time.

Resources

Block 7: The child will practice reusing, recycling and conserving energy on a daily basis.

Virginia Science Foundation Block 1

Scientific Investigation, Reasoning, and Logic

The child will make observations, separate objects into groups based on similar attributes, compare lengths and mass, and develop questions based upon observation using the five senses.

Scientific Investigation, Reasoning, and Logic

Young children have been observing the world around them since birth. This block will help children to develop language to describe their observations. It will teach them to make more careful observations, sometimes with the aid of tools, and to notice patterns within their observations. It should be noted that while some activities may be done to develop process skills alone, process skills are best used in conjunction with other big ideas. For example, observations of leaves provide ample opportunities to tie in discussions about color, shape and living things.

- a) Identify basic properties of objects by direct observation
- b) Describe objects using pictures and words
- c) Sequence objects according to size
- d) Separate a set of objects into two groups based on one physical attribute
- e) Compare the length and mass of different objects
- f) Identify the body parts that correspond with each of the five senses

Sample Activities

- Have students collect pinecones. Use the five senses to describe how the pinecone looks, feels and smells. Fill the pinecones with peanut butter and hang outside for birds. Use pictures to identify birds that come to the feeder. Have students listen for bird songs and try to imitate the sounds.
- Have students assist teacher in lining up stuffed animals for a "parade" from smallest to tallest.
- Store all "like" toys together. All legos go in one bin, all blocks in another, etc. Place pictures on the front of bins to assist children. As children progress, sort them into more specific categories such as all blue legos, all red legos.
- Sort items (plastic cookie cutters, fabric samples, buttons and beads, etc.) using different attributes, such as color, shape, size and texture.
- Compare the lengths of two objects by matching the end of one object with another. Objects to use may include shoes, books, and pencils. Discuss which is longer and which is shorter.

Virginia Science Foundation Block 2

Force, Motion and Energy

The child will describe and categorize properties of materials using magnets.

Force, Motion, and Energy

Children have probably seen a refrigerator magnet before. Some may have even taken these magnets and tried to stick them to other surfaces. Those that have experience with magnets may think that a magnet will attract any object with a shiny surface. Allow students plenty of time to play with magnets, as they are naturally motivating. Magnet activities provide wonderful center activities for students to explore in small groups and discuss together.

[NOTE: Magnets should not be used on or around electronic equipment including TVs, computers, or clocks.]

- a) Describe the effects magnets have on other objects; they stick to some but not to others. Introduce the words "attracted to" and "not attracted to."
- b) Describe the effects magnets have on other magnets; they stick together or push apart.

Sample Activities

- Have students touch magnets to objects around the room. Have them describe what happened (they stick to some but not to others).
- Find five objects that are attracted to a magnet and five that are not.
- Have a magnetic "fishing" center. Tie a magnet to a piece of string and the string to a pencil. Place various magnetic and nonmagnetic items into a plastic container. Holding the fishing pole by the pencil, fish for anything that will stick to the pencil. Glue these to one piece of paper. Glue those that do not stick to another.
- Give students two magnets with like poles marked N and S. Have them touch the two North poles together. What happens? They push away. Have them touch a North end to a South end. What happens? They attract.
- Allow students to explore with magnetic toys such as the magic wand that allows children to move iron filings over the man's face, and the wooden train cars that connect together with magnets.

Virginia Science Foundation Block 3

Matter

The child will develop language to describe an object's position, movement and physical properties. The child will also describe properties of water.

Matter

Children are naturally drawn to objects of various colors and textures but often cannot describe what it is that they are observing. A rough piece of sandpaper may be described by a child as "sticky" (meaning that it catches his/her hand as it passes over the sandpaper) because he/she lacks the vocabulary to properly describe it. This block requires manipulation of objects to develop vocabulary that describes position, movement and physical properties of objects.

- a) Identify colors (red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple) and white and black
- b) Identify shapes (circle, triangle, square, and rectangle) of an object
- c) Identify textures (rough/smooth) and feel (hard/soft)
- d) Describe relative size and weight (big/little, large/small, heavy/light, wide/thin, long/short)
- e) Describe position (over/under, in/out, above/below) and speed (fast/slow)
- f) Recognize water in its three forms (solid, liquid, gas)

Sample Activities

- Have shape scavenger hunts. Give students a paper shape, such as a circle. Ask them to search the room for objects with the same shape as the paper circle.
- Have students take a walk collecting any objects with an interesting feel or texture. Then have students sort them according to those that feel the same. Have students describe the way they feel. Make a whole group collage of like textures.
- Place an ice cube in a bowl and set it out on the windowsill. Come back in an hour or so. What happened to the ice? Leave the water there overnight. What happened to the water? Explain that water can be found as a solid (like the ice), liquid (like the water you drink) or a gas (like water vapor). Have students fill ice cube trays with water and place in the freezer to watch the process in reverse. Show students the water going into the air from a teakettle that is boiling. Place a pan that is filled with ice above the boiling teakettle. The water vapor going into the air will cool and collect on the pan. Then you have a liquid again.

Virginia Science Foundation Block 4

Life Processes

The child will compare the growth of a person to the growth of a plant and an animal and be able to describe basic life processes and basic needs of each.

Life Processes

Babies, puppies, baby chicks, baby cows, etc., fascinate young children. Use this curiosity to teach them how some baby animals and adult animals are alike. Plants too, start as "babies" or seedlings and grow. Both plants and animals need food, water and air to live. Plants and animals can make new plants and animals.

- a) Describe what living things need to live and grow (food, water, and air)
- b) Recognize that "baby" plants and animals are similar but not identical to their parents and to one another

Sample Activities

- Have students grow a Hairy Harry. Have students draw a face on a styrofoam cup and fill with soil. Sprinkle with grass seed and water. Watch Harry's hair grow! What happens if you do not water Harry?
- Play matching games using picture cards with mother and baby animals, and a seedling and full-grown plant.
- Raise various animals in the classroom such as fish, guinea pigs, frogs, and mealworms.
- Ask children to bring in a baby picture. Compare their baby picture to the child. What has changed? What is the same? Show students pictures of animal babies and adults. What has changed? What is the same?

Virginia Science Foundation Block 5

Interrelationships in Earth/Space Systems

The child will be able to create a shadow.

Earth/Space Systems

Students have likely seen their own shadows and shadows cast by other objects but may not be aware of how they were formed. Allowing students opportunities to create and manipulate shadows provides them with an understanding that shadows are created when an object blocks light.

- a) Create a shadow and describe how it was created

Sample Activities

- Create a shadow screen by suspending a sheet between two tables. Place a strong light source behind the screen. Create several cardboard cutouts of various objects. Cast shadows on the screen by holding the cardboard in front of the light source. Ask children to identify the shape.
- Turn on a strong light source (such as an overhead projector) and allow students to hold an object in front of the light to create a shadow on a wall or screen. Allow students an opportunity to move the objects closer to and farther from the light. What changes? (the size) Why is there a shadow (the object is blocking the light).
- Take students outside and ask them to find their own shadow. Help students to trace their shadow. Why is there a shadow out here? (the light of the sun is blocked by their bodies)
- Allow students to retell a story (such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears) using shadow puppets.

Virginia Science Foundation Block 6

Earth Patterns, Cycles and Change

The child will identify simple patterns in his/her daily life. The child will identify things that change over time.

Earth Patterns, Cycles and Change

Students and their parents naturally make daily weather observations when deciding what to wear and whether to carry an umbrella or bring a hat. They recognize routines of daily activities and know if they have brushed their teeth or had snack time. They are beginning to recognize patterns in other objects as well.

- a) Make daily weather observations
- b) Observe and classify the shapes and forms of many common natural objects including seeds, cones, and leaves
- c) Recognize the order or stages of animal and plant growth
- d) Describe home and school routines

Sample Activities

- Daily routines should include discussion of weather and include language such as sunny, cloudy, snowy, rainy and windy. Use cutouts of clouds, sun, raindrops, etc. to record weather on a daily calendar. At the end of each month, count the sunny days, rainy days, etc. Then remove cutouts one at a time and place them on a weather picture graph.
- Discuss how the day's weather influenced the clothes the child needed to wear.
- Collect leaves from the playground and make leaf rubbings with students. Ask students to describe rubbings and to tell how they are alike and different.
- Plant and observe a lima bean in various stages of growth.
- Have a picture/words daily schedule posted for children to see. Help them to create a daily schedule for home using cutouts of teeth to indicate brushing, food to indicate eating, bathtub to indicate bathing, etc. Glue the cutouts onto a sheet of paper in the order they are completed.

Virginia Science Foundation Block 7

Resources

The child will practice reusing, recycling and conserving energy on a daily basis.

Resources

Recycling for young children involves teaching children what they can do to help. The best way to learn about recycling is to have children do it. Some children may already be practicing recycling at home. The best way to learn to conserve water and energy is to teach children to practice these daily habits.

- a) Recognize that some objects can be recycled
- b) Recognize that some objects can be reused
- c) Identify ways that energy can be conserved

Sample Activities

- Ask students to bring in items from home that they recycle (or could recycle). Talk about what is recyclable.
- Keep a recycling bin in the classroom. Teach students to recycle paper, plastic and cardboard. Practice daily after lunch and art activities.
- Remind students of the importance of turning off water and lights.
- Keep a box of scrap paper for students to use to draw or practice writing.
- Have students talk to their parents about recycling.

Resources

Listed below are additional resources that will provide more information about early childhood education.

National Research Council. (1996).
National Science Education Standards.
Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

National Science Teacher Association. (1998).
NSTA Pathways to the Science Standards: Guidelines
for Moving the Vision Into Practice. Elementary Edition.
Arlington, VA: National Science Teacher Association.

Standards for History and Social Science

Introduction

Young children are explorers and adventurers interacting with those around them. The purpose of history and social science is to enable children to understand and participate effectively in their world. The energy,

curiosity and imagination of young children lead them to action and interaction within their surroundings. Foundational concepts and basic understandings are developed in history, geography, civics and economics at a very young age.

History and Social Science Foundation Blocks

History:

Block 1: The child will identify ways in which people are alike and different.

Block 2: The child will develop an awareness of change over time.

Geography:

Block 3: The child will develop an increased awareness of the physical relationship between and among people and places.

Block 4: The child will use words to indicate relative location of objects and people including direction words, comparison words and attribute words.

Economics:

Block 5: The child will develop an increased awareness of the kinds of work people do and the variety of tools people use in their jobs.

Block 6: The child will identify that people have wants and make choices.

Civics:

Block 7: The child will participate as a member/citizen of a classroom community.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 1

History/Similarities and Differences

The child will identify ways in which people are alike and different.

Similarities and Differences

History makes links between the child and home, between school and the wider community, between past and present. It links reasoning and imagination and begins with the child's awareness of him or herself and others.

- a) Recognize ways in which people are alike and different
- b) Describe his/her own unique characteristics and those of others
- c) Make the connection that he/she is both a member of a family and a member of a classroom community
- d) Engage in pretend play to understand self and others
- e) Participate in activities and traditions associated with different cultural heritages

Sample Activities

- Read stories about children, families, schools and communities.
- Tell stories and have children act out the roles of the story characters.
- Have child draw or paint pictures about themselves, their classmates, and family.
- Create (class) books on differences among families and communities.
- Provide dramatic play opportunities for children to act out roles of various family members.
- Provide mirrors so children can see their own faces and the faces of their classmates. Note likenesses and differences.
- Introduce children to games, dance, music, and art from the different cultures represented in the classroom.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 2

History/Change over Time

The child will develop an awareness of change over time.

Change over Time

Young children become aware of time through events specific to themselves and to people in their immediate surroundings. Begin the focus with the child's own history, then when grandparents were children and then to periods beyond living memory.

- a) Describe ways children have changed since they were babies
- b) Express the difference between past and present using words such as before, after, now, and then
- c) Order/sequence events and objects
- d) Ask questions about artifacts from everyday life in the past
- e) Recount episodes from stories about the past
- f) Take on a role from a specific time, use symbols and props, and act out a story/narrative
- g) Describe past times based on stories, pictures, visits, songs and music

Sample Activities

- Have children share a photograph or draw pictures of when they were babies and now.
- Collect and sort sets of baby clothes/toys and students' current clothes/toys.
- Read stories about birthdays. Make a timeline for years 1-4, and put writings and photos on the timeline.
- Play word games giving two events and have child tell which event came before and which came after.
- Have a share time with children bringing in books, toys, photos, etc., belonging to their parents or grandparents.
- Set up a class museum with old tools or everyday objects used long ago.
- Sort pictures into now and the past (long ago).
- Put pictures of daily routine activities in order from morning to night, or early in the day until late in the day.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 3

Geography/Location

The child will develop an increased awareness of the physical relationship between and among people and places.

Location

The energy, curiosity and imagination of young children lead them to action and interaction with their environment. Being egocentric, they view their world from a narrow, limited perspective. They grow in their understanding as they become more aware of themselves in the social settings of their daily experiences - home, school, neighborhood, and community.

- a) Identify and describe prominent features of the classroom, school, neighborhood and community
- b) Engage in play where one item represents another - miniature vehicles, people, blocks
- c) Make and walk on paths between objects- ex., from the door to the window
- d) Represent objects in the order in which they occur in the environment
- e) Experience seeing things from different elevations

Sample Activities

- Involve children in creating simple representations of home, school, or neighborhood through drawings or block construction.
- Provide real objects, models of objects, photographs, simple drawings or a child's developed symbol to use in block and dramatic play experiences.
- Create line paths using tape or chalk. Play games walking the lines from one object to another.
- Make a drawing with a picture of the two objects at the ends of the path and have one trace the path on paper as a child walks the path.
- Have the child walk around a basketball or a tennis court on painted lines or create closed shapes with tape or chalk. Play 'follow direction' games for stepping inside and outside the lines.
- Use flannel board pieces or real objects to arrange objects in the order they appear in the room.
- Provide experiences for aerial view of objects, looking down from steps, upper floor windows, top of sliding board, and standing over block constructions.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 4

Geography/Descriptive Words

The child will use words to indicate relative location of objects and people including direction words, comparison words, and attribute words.

Descriptive Words

As children learn more about their world, they use more words to express the new ideas and information needed to share what they know. Verbalizing helps children to solidify spatial concepts. Exposing children to a wide-variety of experiences helps build vocabulary. Students need to experience direction through movement and senses in order to describe their movements with words.

- a) Use words to indicate relative location
- b) Use words to describe features of locations in the environment and man-made structures found in stories and seen in everyday experiences
- c) Develop control in using direction words - on, under, over, behind, near, far, above, below, toward, and away - one direction at a time
- d) Develop control in using comparison words - closer, farther away, taller, shorter, higher, lower, alike, different, inside, and outside
- e) Develop fluency using attribute words - hard, soft, rough, smooth
- f) Use labels and symbols for what the child has seen

Sample Activities

- Read books and stories aloud to children daily noting location, direction, description and attribute words.
- Provide daily opportunities for children to converse in dramatic play and block play situations.
- Play games like "Simon Says", "I Spy", "Verbal Scavenger Hunt" giving directions to locate an object in the room.
- Sing songs like "The Hokey Pokey."
- Help students create labels and symbols for their block constructions and drawings.
- Help children create directions to parts of the school or playground and attach to photographs or pictures of the locations.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 5

Economics/World of Work

The child will develop an increased awareness of the kinds of work people do and the variety of tools people use in their jobs.

World of Work

The principles of economics influence everyday routines of life. Concepts and understandings develop when young children explore individual interests and build on their own experiences and what they already know. Their interest in the work people do and the tools they use provides a strong foundation for economic basics.

- a) Identify pictures of work and name the jobs people do
- b) Describe what people do in their community job
- c) Match tools to jobs
- d) Match job sites to work done
- e) Role-play the job of workers

Sample Activities

- Match pictures of workers and the tools they use to perform their job.
- Visit work sites (stores, building sites) in the neighborhood to explore jobs people do. Make a list in the classroom and have students draw pictures about these sites and workers.
- Have family members of the children share about their jobs and show tools they use.
- Invite workers to visit the classroom to talk about their job.
- Create a list of the workers in the school; add pictures and name labels of the people doing those jobs.
- Include hats, uniforms and tools as props for dramatic play.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 6

Economics/Making Choices

The child will identify that people have wants and make choices.

Making Choices

If young children are allowed to make choices, then making decisions for themselves as they grow becomes less difficult. Guiding young children to make simple choices will give them the experience and confidence to make good decisions on their own as they grow. Making good choices is at the heart of economic understanding and success.

- a) Identify choices
- b) Recognize that everyone has wants
- c) Choose daily tasks
- d) Role-play purchasing situations where choices are made

Sample Activities

- Read and discuss stories where characters are making choices.
- Make a list of wants. Ask children if they could choose two, what would they choose?
- Have children add to a class list one choice they made when selecting their snack for school.
- Provide choice board for center/work time activities.
- Role-play situations where choices must be made.

History and Social Science Foundation Block 7

Civics/Citizenship

The child will participate as a member/citizen of a classroom community.

Citizenship

The early years are the ideal time for children to understand democratic norms and values (justice, equality, etc.) in their family, classroom and community. Applying these concepts to the nation and world will be easier if the child has experienced and appreciated them on a smaller scale. Democracies are built on the belief that people should be free, should have choices and opportunities, and should work together to make each other's lives better. To maintain our democratic society, we must teach our children to be good citizens.

- a) Cooperate with others in a joint activity
- b) Recognize the need for rules to help get along with others
- c) Participate in creating rules for the classroom
- d) State personal plans for learning center activities
- e) Participate in discussing and generating solutions to a class problem
- f) Share thoughts and opinions in group settings
- g) Demonstrate responsible behaviors in caring for classroom materials
- h) Identify the needs of other people by helping them

Sample Activities

- Read and discuss stories that show how problems can be solved. Act out or role-play these situations.
- Establish class rules and expectations.
- Start the day with a share time where each child may contribute to the class discussion.
- Use dramatic play, interviews, puppets, and other props to talk about behaviors and problems.
- Select a school project to help address a school problem or issue.
- Provide toys, books, and materials that encourage sharing, empathy, and cooperation.
- Plan group activities such as singing, dancing, and celebrations to focus on the class community.
- Have the children work together on one long-term common goal (plant a garden, take care of a class pet, keep a memory book).

Resources

Listed below are additional resources that will provide more information about early childhood education. An * denotes a reference used for development of this document.

*National Council for the Social Studies.
Social Studies for Early Childhood and
Elementary School Children Preparing for
The 21st Century. A Report from NCSS Task
Force on Early Childhood/Elementary
Social Studies. (1988) Silver Spring,
Maryland: National Council for the Social Studies.

Standards for Personal and Social Development

Introduction

The everyday lives of young children provide many opportunities to gain understanding and skills in their personal and emotional development. Appropriate and supportive learning experiences provide an important foundation for personal and social growth.

Several aspects of personal and social development are particularly evident during the preschool years. Foundations of personal and social development involve communication, and interpersonal systems.

During the preschool years children are learning about themselves and others. Young children want to be liked, belong to groups, and be an active participant. They need support as their emotional and perceptual abilities develop beyond their egocentric barriers.

A child's sense of self worth and social competence is facilitated by social experiences. Early childhood education provides preschoolers with supportive social context to foster children's personal and social development.

Personal and Social Development Foundation Blocks

Self-Concept:

Block 1: The child will demonstrate self-confidence and self-reflection.

Self-Control:

Block 2: The child will show self-direction and responsibility.

Approaches to Learning:

Block 3: The child will show eagerness and persistence as a learner.

Interaction with Others:

Block 4: The child will interact easily with other children and with familiar adults.

Social Problem-Solving:

Block 5: The child will learn and use non-physical ways to resolve conflicts.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 1 Self-Concept

The child will demonstrate self-confidence and self-reflection.

Self-Concept

The essence of early personal and social development is a child's self concept. A sense of self-worth enables a confident child to participate in most classroom activities, express emotions, explore toys and materials, and interact with others in the classroom. To develop this confidence, many preschool children need opportunities to learn how to play with others. At times, young children need support in trying new classroom activities

- a) Demonstrate knowledge of personal information including first and last name, gender, age, and birthday
- b) Begin to recognize and express own emotions using words rather than actions
- c) Recognize self as a unique individual and respect differences of others
- d) Develop personal preferences regarding activities and materials
- e) Demonstrate self-direction in use of materials
- f) Develop increased independence in school activities throughout the day

Sample Activities

- Provide opportunities during center time for children to choose an activity, make a plan, and carry out the plan.
- Provide opportunities for children to share ideas and thoughts. Use small tables for snack time and facilitate a conversation between two children.
- Teach/model for children how to put on their jacket, hat, and other outdoor clothing. Provide plenty of time for children to get ready so they have time to practice these skills.
- Make sure classroom materials are accessible and labeled so children can use them independently and return them to a designated location.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 2 Self-Control

The child will show self-direction and responsibility.

Self-Control

Young children benefit from routines and structure. They find comfort and feel secure when they can predict the flow of events and people each day. Managing change can be a challenge for preschoolers. Young children are most successful handling transitions when they are told what to expect in advance. Prior knowledge enables young children to feel in control and participate without confusion.

- a) Contribute ideas for classroom rules and routines
- b) Follow rules and routines within the learning environment
- c) Use classroom materials purposefully and respectfully
- d) Manage transitions and adapt to changes in routine
- e) Develop a positive response to challenges

Sample Activities

- Model for children what to do when they finish a snack. For example, clear their place by disposing of napkin and leftovers in the trash.
- Have child-size cleaning materials available and teach children how to use them. For example, children can sweep the sand around the sand table or use a sponge and bucket to clean up spilled paint.
- Teach the children a simple song to sing when it is time to transition from one activity to another.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 3 Approaches to Learning

The child will show eagerness and persistence as a learner.

Approaches to Learning

As young children develop more awareness perceptually, they are naturally curious and ask questions about everything they encounter. As children gain experience with asking questions, they ask for clarification or additional information. Preschoolers are now able to attend to tasks for 10-20 minutes. Learning to work until tasks are finished or problems are solved is challenging for children of this age group and they frequently need support in this area.

- a) Show interest and curiosity in learning new concepts and trying new activities and experiences
- b) Demonstrate ability to learn from experiences
- c) Increase attention to a task or activity over time
- d) Seek and accept help when needed

Sample Activities

- Collect samples on an outdoor field trip.
- Draw pictures about events and others.
- Participate in small group planning discussions.
- Select and complete a puzzle.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block 4 Interaction with Others

The child will interact easily with one or more children and with familiar adults.

Interaction with Others

Young children are learning to communicate with others. This is an extraordinary challenge as it includes physical, social, linguistic, cognitive, emotional, and personal growth. To accomplish this new level of social interaction, many children need coaching and adult supervision. As a child learns appropriate styles of communication with others, the adult can reduce the amount of supervision and offer simple reminders as needed.

- a) Initiate and sustain interactions with other children
- b) Demonstrate verbal strategies for making a new friend
- c) Interact appropriately with other children and familiar adults by cooperating, helping, sharing, and expressing interest
- d) Participate successfully in group settings
-
- e) Demonstrate respectful and polite vocabulary
- f) Begin to recognize and respond to the needs, rights, and emotions of others

Sample Activities

- Model appropriate styles of communication with children and adults.
- Demonstrate interaction strategies through role-play.
- Use photographs of classroom activities as an opportunity for children to share their thoughts and ideas. Make a class record or graph of their thoughts and ideas.

Virginia Personal and Social Development Foundation Block

5

Social Problem-Solving

The child will learn and use non-physical ways to resolve conflicts.

Social Problem-Solving

Social situations can be a source of frustration for young children. At times, toys and turns seem more important than the feelings of others. Physical aggression is often the strategy of choice used by preschoolers to settle conflicts. Aggression seems to work at first, since the victim may relinquish the toy or give up a turn. Preschoolers need adult support and guidance in learning alternatives to aggression for resolving conflicts. Teachers should coach and model ways for children to communicate their needs and feelings verbally.

- a) Express feelings through appropriate gestures, actions, and words
- b) Recognize conflicts and seek possible solutions
- c) Allow others to take turns
- d) Increase the ability to share materials and toys with others over time
- e) Include others in play activities

Sample Activities

- Role-play common classroom situations.
- List common social problems and ideas for solutions with the class.
- Discuss and make a poster of appropriate responses to social conflicts.
- Write a story with the children using a social situation and read it with the class.

Resources

Listed below are additional resources that will provide more information about early childhood education. An * denotes a reference used for development of this document.

*Dichetelmiller, M., J. Jablon, D. Marsden, and S. Meisels (2001). The Work Sampling System Preschool through Third Grade Omnibus Guidelines. New York, NY: Rebus Inc.